

Befriend The Qur'an

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BEFRIEND THE QUR'AN

There is a deep relationship and a strong one between the Qur'an and Ramadhaan.

شَهْرُ رَمَضَانَ الَّذِي أُنْزِلَ فِيهِ الْقُرْآنُ هُدًى لِّلنَّاسِ وَبَيِّنَاتٍ مِّنَ الْهُدَىٰ
وَالْفُرْقَانِ... ﴿البقرة: ١٨٥﴾

The month of Ramadhaan in which was revealed the Qur'an, a guidance for mankind and clear proofs for the guidance and the criterion (between right and wrong). (Surat al-Baqarah: 185)

That is pertaining to the month, and pertaining to the night:

إِنَّا أَنْزَلْنَاهُ فِي لَيْلَةٍ مُّبَارَكَةٍ... ﴿الدخان: ٣﴾

We sent it (this Qur'an) down on a blessed night [(i.e. night of Qadar) in the month of Ramadhaan, the 9th month of the Islamic calendar]. (Surat ad-Dukhaan: 3)

إِنَّا أَنْزَلْنَاهُ فِي لَيْلَةِ الْقَدْرِ ﴿القدر: ١﴾

Verily! We have sent it (this Qur'an) down in the night of Al-Qadar (Decree). (Surat al-Qadar: 1)

So is there a discrepancy or a conflict? There are two verses saying it was revealed in the Night of Decree and another one saying it was revealed in the month of Ramadhaan. Orientalists claim that there is a discrepancy in this matter. If you go to Sunan an-Nasaa'ee and al-Haakim, Ibn Abbaas and Ibn Jareer in a different saying said the entire Qur'an was revealed in Laylat al-Qadar. Then it was taken down from the seventh heaven to the first heaven closest to us, and over the course of twenty three years it was revealed to the Prophet Muhammad sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam.

The relationship between Ramadhaan and Qur'an is deeper than one thinks. You know the famous story we all know when Jibreel 'alayhis-salaam went to the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam. He grabbed him and he said:

اقْرَأْ ، اِقْرَأْ

And he scared the Prophet sallallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam. Ibn Ishaq, Abu Sulaymaan ad-Dimashqi, Ibn al-Jawzi and others said that this occurred in Ramadhan. It is even deeper than when you know the Prophet sallallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam used to review the Qur’an with Jibreel every single Ramadhan and twice the final time he was living sallallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam. Jibreel would read and the Prophet sallallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam listened, or the opposite. Some scholars said this is the time when he would tell him the affirmed and abrogated verses, and it is possible that this is the time when he knew and learned the Tafseer. Allah sent the best revelation on the best Messenger in the best month in the best night (the Night of Decree). All that shows you how solid the bond between the Qur’an and the month of Ramadhan is.

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The month of Ramadhan in which was revealed the Qur’an. (Surat al-Baqarah: 185)

A verse like that and an expression like that only goes to show you how Qur’an in Ramadhan has a virtue and an excellence unlike any other excellence. That is how our pious predecessors understood it and that is why in Ramadhan they dropped everything for Qur’an. Most of them even passed their classes of Hadith to focus on reading the Qur’an. Before we mention a glimpse of those legendary men in Ramadhan, let us look closely at how our pious predecessors were on a normal day and then we will give a quick glimpse as to how they were in Ramadhan.

One time Abu Bakr Ibn Ayyaash Rahimahullah pointed to a room in his house and told his family I read the Qur’an every day in that room for sixty years. Every day he would finish the Qur’an in that room for sixty years. When he was on his deathbed, his sister began to cry and he said why are you crying? You see that corner of the house, he said I finished the Qur’an in that corner eighteen thousand times. When ath-Thahabi talks about him, he said he used to read the Qur’an every single day once (finish the Qur’an) for forty years (approximately fourteen thousand times). There are different narrations depending on the different circumstances, the settings he was in or talking about.

Ath-Thahabi continues on to say the Sunnah of the Prophet sallallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam is not to read the Qur’an in less than three nights and the Sunnah of the Prophet sallallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam is better to follow. It is really not time to go over the Fiqh issue of the permissibility of reading the Qur’an in less than three to seven days, but there are Ahaadith disliking and discouraging one to read the Qur’an in less than three days (in another one it is less than seven days). The reason is one will not be able to comprehend it but just as there were some of the Salaf who did not like to finish the Qur’an in less than three to seven days, there are those who did. It is a disputed issue and it is possible, for those who say it is impossible.

However, some of the Salaf had different Khitmahs of the Qur'an at the same time and it amazed me when I read this. They had one for example for speed reading, so they can get reward (ten deeds per letter). Those ones were about less than three days, they would finish it in less than three days like the ones you hear of who would finish it every day. At the same time parallel to that, they would have an ongoing Khitmah that is slow recitation to contemplate and analyse it and that would sometimes take weeks, months and possibly years. Some of them would have a third parallel Khitmah to recite the Qur'an and teach it to their students, which would be slower than the previous two. We do not want to get into that Fiqh dispute since we are now at a level where sadly there are those of the Ummah who may go an entire lifetime not completing the Qur'an once. The superb forerunners of the Ummah today are those who developed a bond, dusting the Qur'an off from Ramadhaan to Ramadhaan. Abdur-Rahmaan Ibn Mahdi used to finish the Qur'an every single two days, meaning he would read half of the Qur'an every single day. This is not Ramadhaan we are talking about, this is them on a normal day.

How can one abandon reading the Qur'an when he is abandoning recitation of the Qur'an, the one in which Allah said that the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam says:

يَا رَبِّ إِنَّ قَوْمِي اتَّخَذُوا هَذَا الْقُرْآنَ مَهْجُورًا ﴿الفرقان: ٣٠﴾

"O my Lord! Verily, my people deserted this Qur'an (neither listened to it, nor acted on its laws and orders)." (Surat al-Furqaan: 30)

The Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam complains and testifies against you who abandon the Book of Allah. As Ibn al-Qayyim Rahimahullah says, this is one of the ways that they abandon the Qur'an. Abandoning recitation is one of the ways of abandoning the Qur'an. It is horror and heart melting to even think that you will stand before Allah as a defendant with no other than the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam as a plaintiff against you, pointing to you and saying:

يَا رَبِّ إِنَّ قَوْمِي اتَّخَذُوا هَذَا الْقُرْآنَ مَهْجُورًا

Those who do not know Arabic and I am not condoning that because the language of the Qur'an is essential for the identity of a Muslim. You can read some of that in the introduction of the Noble Qur'an by Muhsin Khan and al-Hilaali and before them Ibn Taymiyyah, how they stated that the Arabic language is an identity. We are against nationalism but the Arabic language is essential. But assume you do not know Arabic now, in the time you are trying to learn it do not abandon the Qur'an in English. You are not going to get the same reward of ten deeds per letter but Inshaa Allah you will get some type of reward.

Who can get enough of the word of Allah, the speech of Allah? Who can get enough from the medicine that is a cure for the heart, the soul and the body? The Qur'an is a cure from doubts and desires. The Qur'an is a cure from worries, anxiety and depression.

Some people when I tell them to recite the Qur'an to relieve the problems, they call me the next day and say well I am still depressed, I still have the doubts. I tell them when a doctor gives medication and we are talking about similar to that anti depressant medication, one of the things he says about some of them is keep taking it for three or four weeks for the medicine to kick in and you get its affect, and after that do not ever stop taking it. The Qur'an needs close friendship to take effect. It needs consistent persistent dedication and recitation in order to see its affect.

Look at one of the Du'aas that the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam taught us for worry, depression and anxiety.

مَا أَصَابَ أَحَدًا قَطُّ هَمٌّ وَلَا حَزَنٌ فَقَالَ : اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي عَبْدُكَ ، ابْنُ عَبْدِكَ ،
ابْنُ أُمْتِكَ ، نَاصِيَتِي بِيَدِكَ ، مَاضٍ فِي حُكْمِكَ ، عَدُلٌ فِي قَضَائِكَ ،
أَسْأَلُكَ بِكُلِّ اسْمٍ هُوَ لَكَ ، سَمَّيْتَ بِهِ نَفْسَكَ ، أَوْ أَنْزَلْتَهُ فِي كِتَابِكَ ، أَوْ
عَلَّمْتَهُ أَحَدًا مِنْ خَلْقِكَ ، أَوْ اسْتَأْثَرْتَ بِهِ فِي عِلْمِ الْغَيْبِ عِنْدَكَ ، أَنْ تَجْعَلَ
الْقُرْآنَ رِبْعَ قَلْبِي ، وَنُورَ صَدْرِي ، وَجَلَاءَ حُزْنِي ، وَذَهَابَ هَمِّي

The Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam said no one makes that Du'aa except his worries, his sadness and depression will go away, he will be relieved of it and Allah will replace it with happiness and ease.

Shaykh your prescription is not working, you always get that. I say okay brother, when is the last time you read Qur'an? Shaykh you told me to read this Du'aa not Qur'an? Just tell me when is the last time you read Qur'an? Well last Ramadhaan, a couple of years ago, many days ago or I cannot remember. Do you know an essential sentence of that Du'aa is:

أَنْ تَجْعَلَ الْقُرْآنَ رِبْعَ قَلْبِي ، وَنُورَ صَدْرِي

In that Du'aa you are asking Allah to take your worry, your problem and your sadness away by making the Qur'an the spring of your heart and the brightness to your chest. I ask you by Allah, how can the Du'aa work if the Qur'an is sitting collecting dust when part of your Du'aa

is replacing that anxiety with the happiness of the Qur'an? Of course it is not going to work, I could have told you that. The Du'aa needs recitation of the Qur'an to work with it, it is a combination of medication.

I know a man in prison, Wallahil-'Adheem they had him in solitary confinement for a long time. The psychiatrist comes by that unit to check in on the people. Once or twice a week he walks by and does his round and they have to do it because that is an area where people snap and lose their minds frequently. When they would pass the cell of this man, the psychiatrist says to him do you need anything? The man refuses to answer and sometimes he will say no. When the psychiatrist passes by, the inmates run to that little window because it is nice to lay your eyes on a human walking, that is a beautiful sight when you have not seen that for years. It is nice to merely say hi and bye to another human being and see something other than your four walls. It amazed the psychiatrist that this man is sitting in his cell 24/7 (on a good day 23/7) and he is content and happy, he does not even look at the window. The psychiatrist was amazed, he asked why are you so happy and at ease? You never ask for anything. He told the psychiatrist I have my best friend and the Qur'an was right next to him, he showed him the Qur'an.

For one who understands what the Qur'an is, what else do you need? Do you need someone to talk to? Would you rather talk to creation and not the Creator? If you want the miraculous affect of the Qur'an to take place, befriend the Qur'an so it will be a means of cure for all ailments (spiritual and otherwise and raising of your ranks which is the most important). Befriend the Qur'an if you want to understand it. Friends never share secrets until they get very well acquainted, then they begin to exchange gifts and then you exchange secrets, and then they begin to console and comfort each other. Begin to befriend the Qur'an so you can see its miraculous affects and benefits. Wallahil-'Adheem there is not a friend you can befriend better than the friendship of the Qur'an. If you are lonely, head to the Qur'an. If you are sad, open the Qur'an. If you are depressed, listen to and read the Qur'an. It is a cure for all that and more. If you are happy, read the Qur'an as your way of thanking Allah.

...لَئِنْ شَكَرْتُمْ لَأَزِيدَنَّكُمْ... ﴿ابراهيم: ٧﴾

"If you give thanks (by accepting Faith and worshipping none but Allah), I will give you more (of My Blessings)." (Surat Ibraheem: 7)

What more do you want from friendship that will land you to Paradise and Firdaws? Recite and elevate, recite and ascend, the elevator of the Qur'an that will land you in your final and ultimate destiny.

Ibn al-Qayyim Rahimahullah says harsh words about this. He said whoever the Qur'an does not cure, may Allah not cure him. And whoever the Qur'an is not sufficient for, may nothing be sufficient for him:

من لم يشفه القرآن فلا شفاء له ، ومن لم يكفه الله فلا كفاه الله

It is Ramadhan now. It is still not late, even though some days passed by in Ramadhan. Roll up your sleeves, take an oath and begin a new friendship with this friendly and abandoned book (the Qur'an). Wallahil-'Adheem there is no contact you can add to your iPhone better than downloading the text and audio of the word of Allah. When you need someone to talk to and you are looking at your contacts, go to the Qur'an and listen to it and recite it.

Az-Zuhri said the month of Ramadhan is the month of recitation and it is the month of feeding the poor, those two things and there is no third to them. This is the month in which ash-Shaafi'ee used to recite the Qur'an sixty times. When Ramadhan came, it was described that Imaam Ahmad sits in the Masjid and constantly reads Qur'an. They said all we see him doing is making Wudhu outside, returning to read Qur'an and making his Salah. The students of Abul-Qaasim Ibn Asaakir said in every day of his last ten days he would finish the Qur'an and that is other than what he leads in Salah. Maalik abandons all his classes and the Hadith class to recite Qur'an. Qur'an in Ramadhan was something they got closer to Allah with. It was the thing they deemed that gets you closest to Allah (not even teaching Hadith). They valued and knew what this verse meant:

شَهْرُ رَمَضَانَ الَّذِي أُنْزِلَ فِيهِ الْقُرْآنُ... ﴿البقرة: ١٨٥﴾

The month of Ramadhan in which was revealed the Qur'an. (Surat al-Baqarah: 185)

Keep in mind we mention these supreme examples as we always do but most cannot do that. It is possible but most cannot do it, but we mention that so if one does a small percentage of what these men do then he will be among the successful Bi'ithnihi Ta'aala. We always look at those above us in matters of Deen and we look at those below us in matters of Dunya.

Also, do not get inspired and say tonight Wallahi I am going to go try to do what ash-Shaafi'ee Rahimahullah did and read the Qur'an twice. It is not appropriate for you to go and do a lump sum that is going to stop you from finishing and continuing on. Look at the Hadith in Sahih al-Bukhari:

أَحَبُّ الْأَعْمَالِ إِلَى اللَّهِ أَدْوُمُهَا وَإِنْ قَلَّ

The most beloved deeds to Allah are those which continue even if they are little.

Start off by what you can do. Maybe a few verses, maybe a page, maybe a Juzz or maybe a few Juzz, but whatever you know you can continue not just for Ramadhan but for after Ramadhan. Over time you will see what an addiction the Qur'an is and then over time you are going to see that you need to up the dosage of the Qur'an little by little. Take advantage of what is left of Ramadhan, it is not too late. It is only a matter of days and nights before they mention our names and say may Allah have mercy on him, we do not know if we will live until next Ramadhan. Hop on that elevator, befriend that loyal friend and cling on to the rope of Allah (the Qur'an). May Allah make the Qur'an the spring and delight of your heart and means of granting you Firdaws.